palmyra trees in large numbers in South Travancore standing close to each other, certain trees were being used for sweet toddy and others for ordinary toddy. Perhaps the objection to his request being granted was that in North Travancore it might lead to illicit tapping. In that case, the same objection ought to apply more forcibly to South Travancore than to North Travancore on account of the larger number of trees in the former. The reason urged that, if a larger number of sweet toddy licenses be granted, there would be illicit tapping on a large scale ought not to weigh, because it was the duty of the Excise Department to find out cases of illicit tapping and bring the offenders to book. More sweet toddy licenses were not being given, because there was no substantial revenue from that source. Revenue alone ought not to be the aim of Government. In the interests of the people the subject-matter of his representation was more important and it was even desirable to abolish altogether tapping for ordinary toddy. Tapping for sweet toddy should be freely allowed just like the cultivation of sugarcane, for, poor people required sweet toddy. The Member, therefore, requested that all restrictions be removed or at least a larger number of licenses freely issued for tapping for sweet toddy.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

26. Pambanar arrack shop.

Mr. W. A. J. Milner (Member, Central Travancore Planters' Association) said that a very large market was being held every Sunday at Pambanar and coolies from every estate in the district were attending it. There was naturally a thriving trade done at the arrack shop now located at Pambanar and drunkenness and disorderliness were the result. There was no attempt to restrict sales in the shop or to close it on market days. He, therefore, asked that, as the shop was solely patronised by estate coolies, it might be removed altogether. Referring to Government letter dated 4th November 1918, he pointed out that the shop was not really supplying the needs of the local population. The large demand came solely from the estate coolies and, as it was the estate population alone who would feel the hardship by the removal of the shop, his Association felt that that was not a valid objection.

Again, apart from the trouble caused amongst estate coolies generally on market days, the annoyance to Pambanar estate itself was intolerable. The shop was open at all hours and coolies were being supplied with drink at any hour of the day or night when they liked to go and get it. They were frequently seen coming out of the place in a condition to be a danger to themselves and other people. Coolies even used to steal firewood in order to sell it and buy arrack and, whenever coolies from other estates were too drunk to go home, they were deposited in the Pambanar estate as the arrack shop was practically on the estate and within a few yards of the Pambanar Factory, where they either lay helpless or started fighting. There had arisen many serious cases which had to be reported to the Police. Thus, the continuance of the shop was a serious public scandal and urgent action was required. There would be no hardship to any of the local inhabitants by its removal, as there was a shop at Arudai—a mile or two away—which could supply all legitimate demands. If the market could also be moved to Arudai, that would settle the whole matter. He, therefore, prayed for the removal of the shop.

He added that, apart from the particular shop, Government should really consult the various Planters' Associations in the matter of liquor shops in Planting Districts as a whole, and, following the practice of the Madras Government, should always in future obtain their views particularly before renewing the licenses of existing shops and also before issuing new licenses, and that his request had the strongest support of the other Planting delegates present and of all Travancore Planting Associations.

Dewan's reply.—Necessary instructions have been issued to the Commissioner of Police and the Excise Commissioner to see that close supervision is exercised over the people who resort to the shop. I understand that Mr. Wright, Mr. Vincent and the Member are to meet the Excise Commissioner and represent their views. That

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is a good idea, as it would conduce to better understanding between each other. A report will be called for from the Excise Commissioner and the question carefully considered.

27. Inconvenience caused by prohibiting the importation of tobacco into Travancore by post.

Mr. A. J. Wright (Member, Kannan Devan Planters' Association) said that the present prohibition was based upon Notification No. S. R. 4612, dated 5th June 1908. Conditions had changed considerably since the above date and it was now desired to secure some modification of the prohibition. In the absence of definite knowledge of the reasons which necessitated the prohibition, it was not easy to suggest the lines upon which it might be modified, but he appealed to Government to consider the matter at an early date and to endeavour to afford the relief desired. It was clear that there was no question of loss of revenue involved and no suggestion that the payment of customs duty upon each importation by post should be remitted. In modern times, it would scarcely appear to be an insurmountable task for the Excise Department to formulate some scheme which, while doing justice to all interests concerned, would allow private individuals to supply their needs of articles which were not produced within the State and which consequently must be imported in some way or other. There was perhaps little or no hardship involved by the ordinary methods of importation to those who resided in the towns and more populous portions of the State, but they did entail difficulty and great loss of time upon dwellers in the more out of the way parts of the country, who, by the prohibition, were deprived of the readiest and most modern means of procuring their supplies of tobacco. What at first sight might appear to be a difficulty, *viz.*, the collection of the duty by the British Post Office, was at any rate not a serious one upon examination, since at Munaar the collections of the Post Office were being paid into the Devicolam Treasury and no difficulty would arise from the retention of such portions of those collections as had been received for payments of duty. It would, therefore, seem to be merely a question of the assessment of duty on parcels passing through the post which was done every day by the post offices of almost every country in the world upon parcels passing their frontiers.

Dewan's reply.—Consistently with Government getting its revenue, Government will be glad to render you all facilities for importing tobacco and its preparations. It would be well if this matter is also discussed by you at the proposed conference with the Excise Commissioner who will be glad to hear what you have to say.

28. Certain suggestions for the development of trade and commerce.

Mr. K. A. Picha Bava Sahib (Member, Trading Classes, Alleppey) submitted the following suggestions for the development of trade and commerce:—

1. At present, in ordinary weather boats took 3 or 4 days from Ernakulam to reach Alleppey and in foul weather the same journey took 10 or 12 days. Besides, considerable loss of property also occurred. The same was the case with the transport of goods from Quilon to Alleppey. To save the boats from the perils incidental to such journeys, a light Railway should be constructed either from Quilon to Ernakulam or from Arukutti to Alleppey.

2. Boats with merchandise which now plied between Quilon and Alleppey and through the Vembanad lake were subject to the dangers of the monsoon and storms. Sometimes when storms arose, the boats found themselves in a helpless position and capsized. For the protection of such boats, wharfs should be constructed, at an interval of 2 miles, close to the banks to accommodate 50 boats.

3. Under the present system of sale of salt, considerable hardship resulted to the people, though the object of Government was to afford all possible conveniences to them. It was, no doubt, the rule that a merchant could buy salt from *Kuduchandrams* in 15 instalments in a month. But, practically, more than 2

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